Workers' Dreadnought

ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

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An East London Woman Down a Coal Mine.

By MELVINA WALKER.

"Come along here," said my comrade, "sign your name and address in this book, catch hold of this lamp and follow on." A terrible feeling came over me. I had so often longed to go down a pit and here I was actually going, and somehow a terrible feeling of fear came over me. We arrived at the pit called the Lewis Merthyr at 2.30. The pit's head was so different to what I had pictured it. I expected to see a very deep, black hole, but no, a lift ascended from the earth, right above the ground; it wasn't very large, but full of coal-dust, with an iron bar round the cage. "Step inside," said Comrade Davis, "hold on to the bar." "Are you ready?" shouted some one from without, and away we went, plunged at once into utter darkness. I felt the iron bar was not safe enough for me. I quickly grabbed hold of our Comrade, as the terrible gush of wind almost swept us off our feet. Strange to say, one felt when one was about half way, that we were going up again, then suddenly we arrived at the bottom. Comrade Davis roared with laughter at the terrible shock we had all received. Then we had to sit down at the entrance of the pit—that we might get used to the darkness. Never shall I forget coming down in that cage; the shock; the terrifying feeling that came over me. I thought of the time when little children under seven years of age were brought down in the arms of their parents to work, and what a shock it must have given them. We mothers know too well how darkness frightens most children; and to nervous children, it must have seemed like going down into a black hole. In 1833, children were working in the pits, when only four or five years old, and the majority were not over eight or nine, girls as well as boys.

Then we made our way through the narrow passage which was very dark, damp, and stuffy, water trickling down the sides of the workings; in some places the floor was ankle-deep in black mud. We came across various dark, gruesome passages. On we walked, until we got to the Machine-room. The Comrade (for they were all comrades in that mine; generally, when coming across the men at work, they shouted: "Who are you?" "Bolshies!" was the reply, and then we received a hearty welcome), who was working that huge, noisy plant, was pumping air up all those passages. In the pit, the lives of all those men depended on the man who was working that machine; it seemed to me to be really wonderful. How they got that huge machine down that pit, puzzled me. The man who was working that wonderful machinery did not realise how important he was; there was no swank about him, he was just playing his part in that wonderful industry.

Who are the Profiteers?

From the "Liberator"

Children Employed in Mines.

On we went, until we came to what they call the small door, in the tunnel of the pit. In 1833, little children were employed to sit near these doors to open and shut them after the coal waggons had gone through. I thought of that book, "The Life of Lord Shaftesbury," by Edwin Hodder, which is confirmed by Government Blue Books, which says children were employed as Trappers, between five and six years old. They had to sit alone in the pitch darkness and horrible silence, exposed to the dampness, and unable to stir more than a dozen paces, lest they should be found neglecting their duty, and suffer accordingly. They dared not go to sleep; the punishment was the strap applied with brutal severity. In those days, as well as these, the pits were infested with rats, mice, and huge beetles and other vermin. These little children had to sit there from the first time coal was brought forward in the morning, until the last waggon at night, for twelve and fourteen hours a day. All this was done in order to create wealth for the good, kind, Christian mine owners, and their excuse for all this cruelty was, that without child-labour, the pits could not be worked at a profit.

While on our journey, we came across coal waggons drawn by horses, and one felt that the pits were not fit for horses to work in; so dark was the tunnel, that in spite of our lamps, it was only when we came near to a miner and he shouted, that we could see him. When we came near to the coal, I became so thirsty and the heat was so intense, sweat was dropping off me, that I quickly asked to be directed to the Saloon Bar. "Ah! you get no Saloon down here," but one of the miners gave me a drink out of his tin can, and it was cooling. There they were, in the terrible darkness, stripped to the waist, with a thin singlet, all full of holes, and sweat pouring off them. One man said: "I have been down two hours," and passing his hand across his chest, the sweat dropped to the ground. One of them asked me how many hours did I think a miner should work? I told him I had been down two hours and I found that too long. He said things are very much better than they were, and they still could be much better, if the miners had control. They did not want control for the sake of working less hours or for more money, but they wanted control in order that they may work under more humane conditions. One of them said: "You know when a man goes for work in a factory, the factory is made safe for him, but a miner has to make the pit safe for himself. Last week, the rope of a shaft broke and a great many were injured. If the miners had control that would not occur."

In some places the tunnels were so low that we had to stoop down and almost crawl through. After we had cut the coal we made for home.

Miners Class-Conscious.

I enjoyed my chat with those men. Every one of them knows they are wage-slaves, they know they are working to keep great, fat mine owners in luxury and wealth. Truly said one: "While we are down here we think." And I thought of those mine owners in the House, who sit for hours discussing how many hours a miner should work, and how much he should get a day. Surely, it ought to be the man who has to do the work down the mine to decide for himself how many hours he should work.

The miners do not care "tuppence" about Nationalisation; it is Sovietisation without compensation; and Mr. Mine-owner your days are indeed numbered.

When arrived at the cage, we had to wait some time before we could ascend. We stood by watching the coal going into the cage, and I saw a little boy of 16 working. I thought: in Soviet Russia that would not be allowed. I compared him to the coal owners' sons, who are still in the schoolroom at that age. These boys are following in the miners' footsteps, and they are teaching them to be independent. On entering the cage I said to my comrade: "I shall give that little boy a tip." "Certainly not," said my comrade, "if the boys do not earn sufficient money, let them come up to the Branch and put in for an increase."

We arrived at the top of the pit very much wiser than when we went down, with faces as black as a sweep's and with no desire to descend again.

POSTPONED.

Owing to a "Hands Off Russia" Demonstration being held in Trafalgar Square on Sunday, August 29th, the one arranged for Victoria Park has been postponed.

Social-Democratic Lies Concerning the Question of the Terror. (By GEORCE LUKACZ.)

Social-Democrats, and especially the "Independents," are in the habit of asserting that no real difference exists between the aims of the Communists and those of the Social-Democrats, and that it is only on questions of tactics that they are divided; one of these prime tactical differences being centred round the question of the terror. They too desire Socialism; but what they cannot accept from the Communists, and what they must fight against with the most appealing "moral" arguments at their command, are the terrorist methods used by the Communists for the attainment of the common ideal.

These, and such-like assertions, conceal two lies. Firstly, it is not true that the Social-Democrats unconditionally reject the weapon of the terror. They do not. They are simply not disposed to use this weapon for the victory of the proletariat. And, further, it is necessary to dispose of the lie that the Social-Democrats (the "Independents" included) earnestly desire the accomplishment of Socialism. They do not, and the refusal to use the power of the proletariat is only a mask for concealing the fact that social democracy has ceased to be a party of the revolutionary class war, and that it is anxious for naught but the achievement of such reforms and conquests as are possible within the framework of capitalist society. The so-called tactical difference conceals in reality an essential difference of character.

It is not now our task to enter into an analysis of the terror. It will suffice if it is understood that the terror is the institutional and organised use of power by one group or class of men against another, in order to compel the latter—irrespective of their convictions—to assume an activity or passivity advantageous to the interests of the former. From this point of view, so-called constitutionalism—the reign of law—is also a reign of terror. It is distinguishable from an open and acknowledged terrorism only in so far that in "normal times" it does not encounter any material opposition. When such opposition is not forthcoming for some considerable period, it appears to the ordinary man that the fear in which he stands of the power which is always ready to enforce the law, is an entirely voluntary submission on his part. But as soon as the condition of class opposition assumes an acute form—which does not necessarily imply a revolutionary situation—constitutionalism throws off its mask and reveals its terrorist character. Class contentions can only be resolved by force, and each class will regard the methods used by the other as terroristic. To give a simple and not strictly revolutionary example: The capitalist speaks of every important strike as an act of terrorism on the part of the Trade Unions against the free labourer, whilst the worker sees a terrorist act in the protection accorded to the strike-breaker by the power of authority.

It is not true to say that the social democracy does not use, and has never used, the weapon of the terror. In does; and it is precisely in its manner of using it that the petty-bourgeois influence on social democracy is perceivable. The power of the proletariat is distinguished from the power of the bourgeoisie by the fact that the terror of the former is confessed and unconcealed. Open declaration of terrorism is not a "moral" question, but results simply from the fact that by this means the nature of the terror as a *class weapon* becomes apparent. It suits the bourgeoisie to conceal this class character, for only thus does it find it possible to attach to itself that considerable section of society which belongs neither to the proletariat nor to the bourgeoisie, and which, from lack of class-consciousness, is in a state of perpetual vacillation. For the proletariat, on the contrary, it is of the utmost importance that the class character of power should be clearly understood by all sections of the proletariat. The necessity for this is due not merely to the fact that by this manner alone can the militant preparation and revolutionary class-consciousness of the worker develop, but also to the fact that only a clear understanding of the inevitability of violent class conflict, and the impossibility of "democracy" between classes, and the practical application of this knowledge, can produce that true democracy *within* the proletarian class, which is preliminary to the true democracy of a classless society.

Social democracy has always operated with its power masked, according to bourgeois precedent. In consequence of this it could never tolerate true proletarian democracy within the organisations of the class war—the Parties and trade unions—but instituted instead a terror operated by the leading bureaucratic section against the will of the masses. Anyone who knows the working-class movement well will be in a position to quote hundreds of examples in corroboration of this contention. It was precisely because social democracy sought to employ the essentially violent and terroristic weapons of the class-war in a "legitimate" manner, but it found itself compelled, whenever the true nature of the working-class movement betrayed itself in violent, revolutionary action to oppose it and confine the movement within "legal" channels. The strike policy of social democracy furnishes abundant illustrations of this fact. The nearer the class-war approaches to the decisive, revolutionary epoch, the more transparent the tactics of Social Democracy become. "Democracy" is obliged to extend its protection to the bourgeois State and bourgeois society, for, as the class-war becomes more open, solutions by compromise become less efficacious, and it becomes more and more impossible to conceal by coaxings and blandishments the terror directed against the working class. The suspension and betrayal of wages disputes was the first step along this eventful path. This was followed up by the forcible maintenance of the truce concluded with the bourgeoisie during the war. These defenders of "democracy," these opponents of terrorism from motives of principle and morals, at first adopted the weapon of denunciation against the revolutionary working class (Liebknecht and German Social Democracy are instances), and then sought, by diverting the revolutionary movement into the paths of "legalism," to convince the workers of the advantages of the policy of collaboration adopted during the war. When, however, the revolution entered on the phase of actual and open conflict, these men, who detested the terror, brought to bear every terrorist weapon of the bourgeois State against the revolutionary aspirations of the working class—machine-guns, criminal tribunals, and espionage. For us Hungarians it is not necessary to turn to Scheidemann and Noske for illustrations. Was it not Payer who had the miners of Salgotarjan shot down? Was it not the "Socialist" police of the Government of Kunfi and Garami who beat Bela Kun and his prison comrades almost to death? Was it not the hirelings of Peidl and Payer who arrested Otto Korvin and delivered him to the executioner? These facts require no confirmation.

Social Democracy employs the terror when the bourgeois State, of which it has constituted itself protector, demands it, and it applies it as circumstances require. It only rejects the terror in principle, and contests it with "moral" weapons when the proletariat proposes to use the terror in its own revolutionary interests. We can see now how "tactical" questions are disguised. It is quite clear that social democracy does not reject the terror from principle (it asserts that merely to deceive itself). Its opposition extends solely to the class-conscious and revolutionary weapon of the proletariat. The apparent campaign against the White Terror does not disprove our assertion. Whoever observes this campaign closely will perceive that it is directed solely against the "abuse" of the bourgeois terror, and simply demands that it should be "restricted to legal limits"; it does not insist upon its complete and absolute abolition—which, in our opinion, can be effected only by the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

We will not dilate on the demand of Payer and Co. that only the "guilty" should be brought to account, and the "innocent" be allowed to go free, which means simply that opportunity should be given for the oppression of the proletariat by social-democratic police spies, assisted by the trade union bureaucrats and Ministers, Secretaries of State, etc. The demand of the "Independents," too, is simply that the terrorist detachments should be disbanded and replaced by the legal instrument of oppression, the bourgeois State (gendarmerie, police, legal tribunals, etc.).

The main distinction between the White Terror and the bourgeois State is that the Terror suppresses the workers without the assistance of social democracy. A consequence of this is that the Party and Trade Union bureaucracy is, against its will, compelled to desert the oppressor and side with the oppressed, without achieving thereby any insight into the nature of the oppression, and without acquiring a proletarian class-consciousness.

It is part of the essential character of the class-war that no hard and fast line can be drawn between means and ends, between principles and tactics. When Social-Democrats sever the problem of force from the problem of achieving Socialism, when they speak "generally" of force and, independently of the "general" problem of achieving Socialism, they not only confuse issues with regard to force, but also with regard to Socialism. The class war knows of no tactics which renders the application of force superfluous. The question of force, therefore, can only be considered in conjunction with the purpose in view; whether it is to be used against the proletariat, or in the interests of the proletariat. In any concrete instance the question is solely one of tactical superiority, as to which weapon can *best* serve the interests of the proletariat *at the given moment*. Social-Democrats, however, reject terrorism and force "in general." They do not offer to oppose the increasing terror of the bourgeoisie by the terror of the proletariat; in a word, they preach anti-terrorism, but, in deed, they employ violence against the proletariat. Is it, in these circumstances, to be expected that the workers should believe the word which professes to be for Socialism, while every deed is opposed to it? The organised power of the proletariat ensures a steady approach to Socialism. Every true Communist knows that Socialism cannot be achieved at a single blow, but by stages, provided that each stage is a revolutionary one. To reject the path is to reject the goal. Socialist society is not a prize that will be offered to the strenuous pleasure-tripper at the end of his journey. Rather the journey is itself the piecemeal conquest and development of Socialism—the revolutionary process of the proletarian class war—the sole path and the sole measure of revolutionary progress.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

POEMS

By L. A. Motler.

The writer of these verses is well-known as the editor of the illustrated monthly, *Satire* (I understand it will shortly be revived), which was suppressed during the war.

The work is a remarkable achievement: the author has been deaf and dumb since he was five years old, and he possesses no understanding of sound, melody and metre in the general way. As a creator of poetry he is a colourist, he uses words and phrases for their colour value, and a whole poem is to him a picture in colours. It will be noticed that nearly all his words are one- and two-syllabled. One might easily dismiss the book with a shrug; for the contents are not "popular rebel songs," nor are they striking and arresting in a significant way. But they take on a different meaning to readers who realise that the poems, although composed scientifically, have no trace of the mechanical.

Motler studies closely the colour forms of good poetry, and from them chooses appropriate models for his own thoughts and emotions. We scan his verse and perceive metre and melody flowing from it—effortless and smooth. His source of poetry is hidden from us, alien to our imagination, yet there flows from it a natural stream that delights us.

STRIKE.

They ranged in one dread line;
The order went;
Swift came the spurts of flame,
And moaning wild.

Back rolled the smoke; light came
With red besprent;
They found, bathed in life's wine,
A pale-faced child.

There is the night of tragedy in these lines; still, one does not want to forget them. I like "My Motherland," "In Summer Season," and "York, 1913." "Souvenirs" is a charming fancy, and in "Vigil" the author has captured the vagrant spirit of an Elizabethan lyric.

VIGIL.

Whereas my Phœbus hastes afar,
And Cynthia through pale vapours peeps,
Ere night, begirt with star on star,
Beyond the purple sunset sleeps,
Toward my lady's casement light,
My footsteps ever-pausing turn
Where her wax sentinels of night
Aureolated steadfast burn.

Beneath the eternal skies that guard,
Nor change from one eternal blue,
Though dark or light or dim or starred
I watch and nature watches too;
Toward the dawning all things move,
Through the half-night so calm and still
Till stars are paled in skies above
And Phœbus waking gilds the hill.

The verses are well printed and put together in a tasty brown-and-yellow cover, and may be obtained at the *Satire* Press, 47, Crossdale Road, N.W.1, for 1s. 6d., post free.

CLAUDE McKAY.

REMINISCENCES OF LEO TOLSTOI.

By Maxim Gorki.

(Hogarth Press, Richmond: Price 5s.)

In a few brief notes and a letter, Gorki has given a striking revelation of the personality of the man Tolstoi as one might expect it to be. The remarkable thing about it all is that Gorki never understood Tolstoi: he tried hard to, but the elusive spirit of the man seemed to have baffled his intellectual comprehension. In his endeavour to understand, Gorki gives us the most intimate and revealing pictures of the great man, but as soon as he tries to analyse Tolstoi he fails lamentably. Gorki complains that Tolstoi apparently regarded him as a peasant, one belonging to a strange species different from his own, the aristocrat's, and he rather thinks that "perhaps peasant to him [Tolstoi] means merely—bad smell." But he doesn't even dream nor hint that Tolstoi was patronising him.. Rather naïvely he relates how grand he was in his peasant ways, even when he spoke like a peasant, "the beauty of his speech saturated with village simplicity." Tolstoi loathed the insincerity of the *barin's* life. He had lived it and turned away from it to seek spiritual salvation in peasant life. Yet, as Gorki shows, he was astonishingly many-sided. He was tolerant, subtle, and was apparently at ease in any grade of society. "When he wished to please, he could do so more easily than a clever and beautiful woman." But, like water, he found his level and a measure of peace in the life of a peasant. He seemed puzzled that Gorki, although possessing great intellect, did not have peasant manners. For to Tolstoi the highest intelligence and vitality of Russia belonged to the peasants. Gorki seemed to have shed his peasant clothing, so Tolstoi tells him: "I am more of a mouzhik than you, and I feel better in a mouzhik way." Of course, a peasant may naturally have aristocratic manners, while an aristocrat may have plebeian manners. Tolstoi feels that Gorki has a good heart, but he cannot understand his mind, and he declares: "You are not Russian, your thoughts are not Russian." They both misunderstood each other altogether; for Gorki's heart was towards the West, he wanted to reach higher, while

(Continued on page three.)

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

Impotent League of Nations.

Mr. Raffan asked the Prime Minister if the Covenant of the League of Nations had been communicated to the Soviet Government of Russia; and, if not, when it will be so communicated.

The Prime Minister did not think it had been so communicated, but would make inquiries. He thought the Soviet Government had not the same affection for the League of Nations as the hon. gentleman has.

Mr. Raffan: Is the right hon. gentleman aware that the objection taken by the Soviet Government to action proposed to be taken under the League of Nations was that they had not been invited to participate in its deliberations: and that they objected to a few great Powers masquerading as a League of Nations?

The Prime Minister: Their objection was that there were people in the League of Nations they did not like.

Captain W. Benn: Was not their objection due to the fact that the Government refused to refer the dispute with Poland to the League as long as they thought Poland was going to win? The Prime Minister did not know what their objections were. We know that all proletarians object to it because it is an instrument of the Capitalist class, and if ever it is allowed to act, it will only do so in the interests of that class.

Unemployment.

The Prime Minister said that the House of Commons has taken the most gigantic step ever taken to deal with unemployment, at great expense, by the provision of a great insurance scheme. This will probably be of as much use to the workers as the National Insurance scheme.

"Beneficent" British Rule.

Sir Alfred Yeo (L.) drew attention to the cases of flogging and torture of natives in Nduru, British East Africa. In one case the torture was so severe that, according to Dr. Henderson, fat had been crushed out of the muscles; in another case the native had died from the torture and flogging.

Secret Mandates.

Mr. Raper asked what were the exact scope of the powers embodied in the Mandates granted to Great Britain for Mesopotamia, and to France for Syria; and if these Mandates empower military occupation without reference to the wishes of the majority of the inhabitants.

Mr. Bonar Law said the terms of the mandates had not yet been settled.

Meanwhile the natives are being crushed by the mandatories.

Munitions for Poland.

August 9th. Mr. Bonar Law said that no munitions of war surrendered by the Central Powers were being supplied to Poland.

Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy asked whether the s.s. "Poznan" of London was discharging Handley-Page aeroplanes, and the Dutch s.s. "Triton" was discharging British rifles at Danzig on or about July 29th, and if British soldiers were used to discharge them.

Mr. Bonar Law said that British soldiers were used for unloading supplies to Poland, but not until the ethnographical frontier of Poland had been passed by the Soviet forces. He also said that there was no evidence that these were our munitions.

Whose could they have been? Did the British Government supply munitions to Soviet Russia when Poland crossed her frontier, or protest against the action taken by Poland?

Parliament to be Consulted.

Mr. Bonar Law said that "we shall certainly not go to war without asking the House of Commons. As to what is meant by warlike operations, that is another question." The latest policy is not to declare open war upon a country, as a pretext for so doing may be lacking, but to make war through the blockade and military missions and by giving assistance to a cat's-paw.

Troops in Strikes.

Replying to Mr. Myers, who asked whether troops in Danzig will be employed to break any strikes which occur there,

Mr. Churchill stated that the employment of troops in strikes would depend upon the nature of the strike. "Troops would not be employed in industrial strikes between employers and workmen." In Belfast and Glasgow they were so employed.

Land for Ex-Servicemen.

We heard a great deal at one time of the land in Ireland that was to be given to ex-servicemen, but now it transpires that 13 have been given holdings in Ulster, but no dwelling houses with plots have been provided by the Local Government Board. Things are managed better in Soviet Russia!

French Action in Syria.

Rustun Haibar Bey lodged a protest with the League of Nations against the French action in Syria, but Mr. Harmsworth did not know when it would be considered. The League of Nations only exists on paper, so it is not to be wondered at that this question has not been considered by it.

Self-Determination.

Mr. Bonar Law, replying to Mr. Raper, said that the boundary between the British and French spheres of influence in Syria will "be delimited by a Commission on which the respective local authorities will be represented, but the determination of the frontier itself is a matter for the principal Allied Powers, in whose favour Turkey is to renounce all rights in these regions." By "local authorities" he did not mean the Arab Government, but "the people who have recently been appointed in the district."

Useless Employment Exchanges.

Employment has been found by the Employment Exchanges for only 564,403 out of 4,800,000 discharged soldiers. There are still 200,000 unemployed What are their "King and Country" doing for them? Their King writes sympathetic letters!

No Likelihood of Peace.

Mr. G. Doyle asked what steps were being taken to extend No. 6a of D.O.R.A., which permits women to be employed on the two-shift (day) system, which expires on August 31st, or upon the termination of the war, whichever is the later date, until the passing of the Women, Young Persons, and Children's (Employment) Bill?

Mr. Shortt did not think any steps necessary, "as the contingency was not very likely to arise."

Bolshevik Gold.

Sir J. D. Rees asked whether, since the law as it now stands gives no power to deal with persons receiving money for Bolshevist propaganda in this country, a Bill will forthwith be introduced, providing for punishment of recipients of such money, and for the protection of the threatened public?

Mr. Bonar Law said the Government was not prepared to adopt the suggestion. It would consider it when there is danger. Dr. Murray thought that Ministers' articles in the *Evening News* was the best Bolshevik propaganda!

* * *

Lieut.-Colonel Amery stated that in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria it was necessary "in the interests of peace, order and good Government" not to allow Christian missions to operate freely.

Blockade of Russia.

August 11th. Mr. Walter Long, in reply to Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy, said that the blockade of Russia was raised long ago, yet on August 5th the Prime Minister referred to the tightening of the blockade, and Mr. Tchitcherin has stated that up to the present not one foreign ship has been allowed to enter Russian ports.

Col. Wedgwood asked if the Admiralty would give the Russians the plans as to where the mines are, so that they may sweep them up. Mr. Long replied that the answer should be reserved till application is made by the Russian Government; yet later on he said that the mines were laid by the Germans and Russians. If so, why have *we* the plans? He also said there were no restrictions as to trade.

Women's Wages.

Dr. Macnamara, replying to Mr. Hogge, said that the number of women earning 50s. a week or over must be small, but the number earning between 28s. and 45s. was considerable. He contrasted these figures with the prevalent pre-war average of 12s. and 14s. It had been previously stated that the least a labourer can live upon is 44 5s. per week. 28s. is far less now than 12s. before the war.

Super-Tax.

In 1919-20 the number of persons assessed for super-tax was 45,696, while in 1913-14 it was 13,937.

BOOKS REVIEWED.—*Continued.*

Tolstoi was all for the East: he would go lower to a better life.

It was the hankering after, and glorification of, Western commercialism that led Gorki to regard Tolstoi as "a vast mountain across our nation's path to Europe, to the active life which sternly demands of man the supreme effort of his spiritual force"; the embodiment of "the unhealthy ferment of the old Russian blood, envenomed by Mongolian fatalism, and also chemically hostile to the West with its untiring creative labour, with its active and indomitable resistance to the evil of life." His summing up of Tolstoi puts Gorki in a strange light. It shows him to be a mere materialist in the worst sense of the term and that he is alien to what the great thinkers regard as the "spiritual forces of life." Gorki seems to have acquired too much of the artistic temperament. This might explain his vacillating attitude towards the Russian workers' revolution. In his own words, which I think I read in the New York *Tribune* some months ago, he could not stand "an experiment upon the living body of Russia." He *did* stand all the Czarist rape of "the living body of Russia," even though he lifted up his voice and fought against it. But when from the terrible abuse of her body Russia gives birth to a healthy infant, Gorki cannot stand the operation that would save both mother and child. Like Kropotkin and Emma Goldman, Gorki hungers for the flesh-pots of Western commercialism. Bertrand Russell tells us in the *Nation* that he is dying, for he is an artist, and art is anarchic. Except for *My Childhood*, which I didn't like for its stressing of details, leaving little to the imagination, I have never read Gorki. Now I shall have to read him to find out if he is a great artist. In the evolutionary and revolutionary order of things, the individual life is often ruthlessly sacrificed in the relentless struggle of the whole. Nature takes no special care of her children, and those who cannot survive changes are thrown on to the scrap heap. It would be a great loss to universal literature if Gorki should kill himself from a broken heart.

I like to think that Tolstoi would have fared differently had he lived; that he would have thrown himself whole-heartedly into the new life and worked indefatigably. To him a period of non-creative art would have meant very little. He would have immersed himself in work—just the ordinary reconstructive work of the new order—finding pleasure and rare exhilaration in the ardours of toil. For to Tolstoi, life was infinitely greater than human art.

"The one remains, the many change and pass."

Gorki tells us that "he talked more of life and things than of literature and art." Tolstoi was too big and primitive for the literary and art circles.

He despised his disciples, yet he suffered them—not from vanity, as Gorki thinks, but because he may have felt that there might be something in them after all, he might give them something of his own. It was not for him to indulge in a sweeping condemnation of human character. Although he detested Romanticism, Tolstoi is a singularly romantic figure. Men will remember his wonderful life, and, neglecting his preachments, turn with zest to the deep romantic note underlying the surface realism of the *Kreutzer Sonata*, *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace*. His women will always live, and, in spite of Tolstoi, they are all romantic creatures. What a man he was! A believer and an iconoclast, a *barin* and a peasant, a lover and an ascetic, all in one. And he lived true to his different moods. Never slave, but never free. His spiritual war against the sex impulse made him judge women harshly. Highly passionate, even in old age; tortured by a multitude of conflicting convictions, he remained yoked to a wife and family, yet ever yearning for individual freedom. At last, when he was nearing the end of the road, he mustered courage enough to cut himself adrift. Was there ever such a strange contradiction? It was like a man contemplating suicide all his life, but refraining, from doubt of its worth rather than from lack of courage, taking the step in extreme old age when his mental vigour had diminished. Tolstoi took the natural step befitting the man who lived such a full, varied, rebellious life, spiritually and socially; and Gorki, betraying a woeful lack of intuition, sees in it only the action of a poseur!

Still Gorki writes splendidly of Tolstoi when he understands him, and one cannot quarrel with his naïve frankness because he is not big enough to comprehend the whole man. Tolstoi, more than any one else, would understand Gorki's shortcoming, for he took the measure of all men. He was surprised at Gorki's ignorance of women, how he could not understand what the General's widow wanted of him, until she was forced to shout it out in plain Russian. And when he faintly understood, he treated her brutally, in a way that Tolstoi, or any other sensitive man, could not. Tolstoi laughed heartily when Gorki related the incident and remarked, after a pause: "You are funny—don't be offended—very funny."

In a charming sentence, Gorki says in part: "If he were a fish, he would certainly swim only in the ocean, never coming to the narrow seas, and particularly not to the flat waters of earthly rivers." But I think Tolstoi would joy in coming to shore and exploring the mouths of rivers, he would revel in the sensation of the little fishes swimming round him and touching his body.

The Gorki that reveals himself to me in these reminiscences is charmingly modest, honest and realistic, but curiously naïve and unimaginative. He is a modern idealist, whilst Tolstoi belongs to the great tradition of Jesus. Of the drunken woman of Moscow lying in the gutter, although he feels great pity for her, Tolstoi says: "I felt that if I had touched her I could not have washed my hands clean for a month—horrible." And again, "The flesh should be obedient to the spirit; but how do we live? The flesh rages and riots and the spirit follows it helpless and miserable."

Sometimes Gorki shows a lightning flash of understanding of the man's great nature; for instance, when he sees him at Gaspra by the coast, contemplating the ocean, he remarks: "The sea is part of his soul."

CLAUDE McKAY.

OUR NATIONAL HYPOCRISY.

Considering the criminal record of British Imperialism in foreign countries, covering a long period of years, we would take it for granted that English bourgeois writers would find some other methods than the overworked arguments of white morality to justify their indictments of Asiatic Imperialism.

Mr. Mackenzie in his work, *Korea's Fight for Freedom*, informs us that the Japanese have tried to debauch the Koreans with opium and "they beat, they outraged, they murdered in a way and on such a scale which it is difficult for *any white man to speak of with moderation*. England fought China to establish the opium trade, and those italicised words!—with Amritsar, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Russia and Ireland standing mute before the bar of public opinion! It has been said that hypocrisy has been so ingrained in our national mind that it has become second nature to us.

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THE COUNCILS OF ACTION.

The past week has seen a tremendous change in the attitude of the Labour movement towards the British Constitution. At first sight, it looks as if the leaders in the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress had taken the decisive step, but on closer examination, it becomes clear that it is the inert mass of the workers, the members of the rank and file, who have gradually been realising the futility of Parliament and the restraining influence the Labour leaders have been exerting upon them, and who have awakened to class-consciousness and the spirit of Internationalism, who have united in asserting their power, and have forced their leaders to obey their will. The possibility of a General Election at no very distant date, may also have been a contributory factor with the leaders, in taking the decisive action they have. But, whatever the causes, we congratulate them on coming out strongly on the side of the workers at last, and on forming Councils of Action. It now rests with the rank and file to see that these Councils do not become dead bodies, but that they infuse them with life and energy, so that they are really Revolutionary Councils, which will work for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the Communist Commonwealth. The mere setting up of Councils is not enough. They must be permeated with the Communist spirit, and to that end, all Communists should endeavour to be represented upon them. It is no easy task to be a Revolutionary, it means endless self-sacrifice and courage, unceasing hard work, strenuous self-discipline and boundless hopefulness. There will be many set-backs before the revolution is accomplished, but we must go forward unflinchingly, determined to achieve the end we have in view.

The workers are being put to the test. Do they realise their power, and have they the courage to force their leaders to carry out their wishes? If the Councils of Action are to succeed the local delegates must elect and instruct the delegates to the Central Council of Action, and if their instructions are not obeyed, they must recall those delegates and replace them.

Comrades, we have undertaken a great responsibility, and we must see that our enthusiasm does not waver, nor our energy flag. The object for which we are fighting is worth all the suffering and weariness we may have to endure. We have put our hand to the plough and there must be no looking back.

NO WAR WITH RUSSIA.

Events have succeeded each other rapidly during the past week. On Monday, August 8th, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party held a conference in the House of Commons, at which the following resolution was passed:—

That this Joint Conference, representing the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party, and the Parliamentary Labour Party, feels certain that war is being engineered between the Allied Powers and Soviet Russia on the issue of Poland, and declares that such a war would be an intolerable crime against humanity; it therefore warns the Government that the whole industrial power of the organised workers will be used to defeat this war.

That the Executive Committees of affiliated organisations throughout the country be summoned to hold themselves ready to proceed immediately to London for a National Conference.

That they be advised to instruct their members to "down tools" on instructions from that National Conference.

And that a Council of Action be immediately constituted to take such steps as may be necessary to carry the above decisions into effect.

The following were subsequently appointed as a Council of Action (with power to co-opt others):—

Representing the Parliamentary Party: Messrs. William Adamson, M.P., J. R. Clynes, M.P., J. O'Grady, M.P., John Robertson, M.P., and Col. Wedgwood, M.P.

Representing the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress: Messrs. Harry Gosling, A. A. Purcell, A. Swales, R. B. Walker, and Miss Margaret Bondfield.

Representing the Executive Committee of the Labour Party: Messrs. A. G. Cameron, Frank Hodges, C. T. Cramp, Robert Williams, and J. Bromley.

Next day they interviewed the Prime Minister, and Mr. Bevin, acting as spokesman, told him that they were against direct and indirect war with Russia. He said, "Labour's fight will not be merely against Governments, but it will be a contest, in our opinion, against the forces of reaction, to whom Governments have responded, in the event of a declaration of war." He proceeded to condemn the policy of the Government towards Russia for the last three years, and the fact that France had been allowed to be the master of our policy. "If war with Russia is carried on directly in support of Poland, or indirectly in support of General Wrangel, there will be a match set to an explosive material, the result of which none of us can foresee to-day.

The Prime Minister declared that he and his colleagues were all for peace, but if the independence of Poland were menaced, a question which 'will arise one way or the other when the terms are known,' he wished to know what would then be Labour's attitude? Mr. Bevin replied: "Labour will consider the question when that question arises."

The Prime Minister: "Very well, that is quite good enough for me."

The Prime Minister, in reply to Mr. Bevin, stated that it was Poland's affair what kind of constitution she set up, provided it were done by choice and not by force. He did not care what the Constitution is.

Lloyd George's Statement.

Later in the day the Prime Minister made a statement on Poland and Russia, in the House of Commons. He said that the Polish attack on Soviet Russia was not justified, and that France and England had warned her against it. (Yet, a week later, Mr. Bonar Law did not think it desirable to lay this dispatch on the table of the House. There is evidently some advice to Poland which does not tally with this statement of the Prime Minister's!) He declared that he wanted peace, and that we should only help Poland if her independence were threatened. We should not send troops, but financial and material assistance, advice, and guidance, and we should bring economic pressure to bear upon Russia. As a member of the League of Nations, we were bound to help Poland if her independence were threatened. But the crux of the whole matter lay in these words: "There is the danger which is involved to the peace of Europe if you have a great agressive Soviet Empire co-terminous with Germany." That is what the Allies fear. They know that Russia does not want to extend her boundaries, but they fear her Communist propaganda.

Throughout his speech Mr. Lloyd George assumed that the Soviet terms would be harsh, like the Versailles Treaty, but before the House rose a special evening addition of the *Daily Herald*, containing the peace terms, was handed to him, and he had to admit that they were very generous.

On Wednesday a statement was published in the evening papers that France recognised Wrangel's Government in South Russia, and would send a High Commissioner to Sebastopol. Lloyd George knew nothing about it, it had not been discussed at Lympne, and he was sure that it was not official. Next day it was confirmed officially.

Meanwhile Italy has started negotiations with Soviet Russia.

Special Trade Union Conference.

On Friday a Trades Union Conference was held at the Central Hall, Westminster, attended by over 1,000 delegates, who were unanimously agreed to oppose all war with Russia and to respond to a call for a general strike if war were imminent. They approved the formation of the Council of Action. Mr. J. H. Thomas said that he had always opposed direct action because he believed that the same results could be obtained through the ballot-box, but now he thought they were justified in saying that no vote at the ballot-box could prevent war to-day, and that no parliamentary action could do what they were being asked to do. He believed that the disease was so desperate and dangerous that only desperate and dangerous methods could provide a remedy. "If this country is dragged into another war, economically, financially, and morally, it will lead to such consequences that no one will be able to control them, because I believe that giving effect to this resolution does not mean a mere strike. Do not be under the misapprehension that you are merely voting for a down-tools policy. It is nothing of the kind. If this resolution is to be given effect to, it means a challenge to the whole constitution of the country."

The following resolution was carried:—

"That this Conference of Trade Union and Labour representatives hails with satisfaction the Russian Government's declaration in favour of the complete independence of Poland as set forth in their Peace Terms to Poland, and realising the gravity of the international situation, pledges itself to resist any and every form of military and naval intervention against the Soviet Government of Russia.

"It accordingly instructs the Council of Action to remain in being until they have secured:—

"(1) An absolute guarantee that the armed forces of Great Britain shall not be used in support of Poland, Baron Wrangel, or any other military or naval effort against the Soviet Government.

"(2) The withdrawal of all British naval forces operating directly or indirectly as a blockading influence against Russia.

"(3) The recognition of the Russian Soviet Government and the establishment of unrestricted trading and commercial relationships between Great Britain and Russia.

"This Conference further refuses to be associated with any Alliance between Great Britain or France or any other country which commits us to any support of Wrangel, Poland, or the supply of munitions or other war material for any form of attack upon Soviet Russia.

"The Conference authorises the Council of Action to call for any and every form of withdrawal of Labour which circumstances may require to give effect to the foregoing policy, and calls upon every trade union official, executive committee, local Council of Action, and the membership in general to act swiftly, loyally and courageously in order to sweep away secret bargaining and diplomacy and to assure that the foreign policy of Great Britain may be in accord with the well-known desires of the people for an end to war and the interminable threats of war."

Smillie Threatens France's Coal Supply.

Robert Smillie said we ought not to interfere with France, but "if France and Wrangel are successful in cutting off Russia's coal supply, will it be interfering too much with France if we cut off her coal supply?" That would be the action he would be inclined to take.

The Conference rose as a tribute to Keir Hardie, who more than ten years ago advocated a general strike against war.

The "Red Flag," the revolutionary song of Socialism, was sung during the proceedings, and "The International" at the end.

Local Councils of Action are being set up all over the country, and in some cases sub-committees have been appointed to deal with Strike arrangements, questions of supply and transport and other matters.

On Monday, August 16th, the Prime Minister made a statement in the House before it adjourned, but said little of moment. The Government was prepared to accept the challenge of the Council of Action, the setting up of which was an attack upon the Constitution. Should there be any attempt to dictate the policy of the Government by industrial action, it would be contrary to the Constitution and would be resisted by the Government with all the resources in its power. He declared that he and his colleagues were fighting strenuously for peace during the last few weeks, and that the action taken by Labour had not altered their policy, and was quite unnecessary. His views and those of the Secretary for War were the same.

* * *

August 17th. The Polish peace delegates reached Minsk last night, six days late. All the general meetings of the Conference will be open, and Press correspondents admitted. The Russians are prepared to consider reasonable modifications to their peace terms.

COLOURED CONSCRIPT LABOUR.

Since the ending of the war thousands of European workers, outraged and terrorised by the cossacks of American Plutocracy, have returned home from the United States. The lumber camps, steel mills, mines and other essential American industries are being depleted of labour, chiefly unskilled. There is a movement on foot to introduce Chinese labour in America—one aspect of it is the solicitude of American Liberals for the integrity of a democratic (!) China, as opposed to imperial Japan. They would prefer Japanese labour, which is regarded as more efficient, but this they cannot openly advocate on account of the situation in California. If the United States plutes can get the smug American democracy to swallow the bait they can recruit Japanese labour via China. All these subterfuges will not help Capitalism. The Chinese agitators are fatalists, the Japanese are fanatics, and they are to be reckoned with wherever oriental labour is employed. *Apropos* of this we learn, that British Capitalism in the colonies, finding Indian labour intractable, is trying to secure "indentured Chinese coolies." The English are adepts at finding the nice word. We who have lived in the colonies know that indentured labour is virtually slave labour. Coloured conscript labour and conscript soldiers! Yet we hear of strange things happening. In the West Indies the negroes are emigrating in their thousands to North, Central and South America—refusing to labour for 2s. and 3s. per day, and the large estates cannot be worked for lack of hands. In East Africa, the savages can live without slaving, for 2d. a day, and so they are being conscripted "for their own good." The psychological aspect of the universal labour problem is, that whole masses of people are instinctively refusing to toil and slave to make profits for their masters.

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSEKEEPING.

By E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

"Oh, yes, I am a genuine convert to Communist housekeeping, Co-operative housekeeping I prefer to call it, and to Communism also. I was absolutely against it before I had tried it. I declared I would never submit to it. Indeed, I was quite prepared to resist and to persuade all the women in the street where I lived, to resist with me—really, I was quite militant about it!"

"And now you've settled down to it?"

"Oh, no! I'm an enthusiast! And I didn't just submit—all I did was quite voluntary. I only took part in it, gradually, as I discovered its advantages."

"How did you begin?"

"Well, I shall tell you. Of course, you know that before the Revolution, this was a very poor and overcrowded district. It is quite transformed now, but the streets that used to be here were nothing but slums. When my husband was killed in the war, and I had only the pension to depend on, I had to give up our house and moved into two rooms in one of the wretched little houses near here. Even though my husband's firm had made me an allowance up to the time of his death, I had so many debts to meet that I had to sell most of the furniture and I had a most miserable time. After the war, prices kept rising and things got worse and worse for every one, at least for every one in my position—as of course you know—but when the Revolution came, I was utterly opposed to it. I thought the Communists were perfectly dreadful people, and I went to all the meetings that were held in this district against them. After the Soviets were set up, I was a passive resister, as far as I dared, and without making any sacrifices. I took all I could get in the way of benefits, but I wouldn't help the Soviets and Communism the least little bit.

As two of the children were under six, I had the option of doing my own housework, instead of working at anything else, and although I had been a telegraphist before I was married, and though I simply loathed housework, I chose to do my own work at home, so that nothing I did should assist the Soviets in any way.

"When I heard that they were beginning to build Co-operative houses, I wouldn't even go to look at them.

"Then some one in our house got small-pox, and I was terrified: I rushed to the Soviet Health Office, where I'd declared I'd never go, and begged the Commissary there to help me to get away. She was most kind; indeed, I needn't have gone there, for she already knew all about us, and was making arrangements for us to be motored to an isolation home, where we could be kept under observation till all possibility of our developing the disease had passed. I was so sure we'd caught it, and so terrified of it, that I'd have submitted to anything; but if it hadn't been for the fright, I should have thoroughly enjoyed the time in the isolation home. The children liked it immensely. We had a lovely sitting-room and garden all to ourselves, a nice little bedroom each, and all sorts of books and games. The food was excellent, and it was delightful to know that one need have no anxiety about paying for it. It was the first country holiday we had had for years.

"When it was time to leave, we were told that our house had been condemned as unfit, and would soon be pulled down. I was asked whether I wanted to go back to London, or whether I would rather go to live in one of the new Village Communes. I said I preferred London, and I was offered rooms in the new house where I now live. I said I wouldn't go into a Co-operative house, and that I didn't want rooms found for me, but would choose my own. I was given a card for three nights in a Soviet hotel near Liverpool Street, and I said I'd be sure to find rooms to suit me in that time.

"Things were not organised then as they are now. Lots of people were still living in the old houses, and to a certain extent, in the old way, partly because the Soviets hadn't had time to build new houses and make Communist arrangements for every one. House accomodation was all rationed by then, however, and for myself and the three children, I was entitled to a minimum of three rooms, but I couldn't find as much as one room anywhere.

"I soon gave up looking round on my own account, for every one seemed annoyed at being bothered about the matter, and told me to go to the local Soviet Housing Bureau, where the officials could tell me in a few moments what rooms were available in any part of London. So I had to go to the Bureau. The Secretary there was most obliging, but she couldn't offer me rooms anywhere, except in a Co-operative house; the old houses were being condemned as fast as the people could be got out of them, and only Co-operative houses were being built. I had expected the women would all object to Co-operative housekeeping; but it seemed they were simply clamouring to live in Co-operative houses. The people who were living in fairly good houses were naturally made to wait for accomodation in the new Soviet houses, until the inhabitants of the condemned houses had been provided for. However, the Secretary said that as I was opposed to Co-operative housekeeping, she would be able to arrange for me to exchange rooms with some one living in an old house by and by; but this could not be done for some time, because there was so much moving going on, or that people had to wait their turn to have their furniture removed and their rooms decorated through the House Committees. She told me I should probably have to wait three months before such an arrangement could be made.

"The only thing for it was to go into a Co-operative house for the present. 'But you can live independently if you want to in some of the Co-operative houses, and I shall arrange for you to go into one of those. We have rooms that would just do for you in a Co-operative house, quite close to where you were living,' the Secretary said.

"She wrote the address on a card and handed it to me. I took it, though I knew exactly where the house was; it was the one I had helped to persuade the neighbours not to visit.

"When we got here, every one treated us most kindly. The Secretary of the House Committee said she was sorry I meant to live independently, but she was quite ready to help me to do it as comfortably as possible. She offered us a sitting-room, a bedroom for me, one for the two youngest girls, as they were under school age, and one for Ethel, as she was going to school then, also a bath-room, kitchen and scullery. She said they'd fit me up a larder on the roof garden and have an electric copper and iron, and a mangle put in the scullery, as I was determined to do the washing myself, and to do it in my own rooms.

" 'And now will you come to choose the furniture?' she asked me.

" 'But,' I answered: 'I've got furniture of my own. I want my own things.'

"She looked disappointed: 'Wouldn't you like to choose something that would really suit the rooms?' she said. 'The inmates here have all been so kind in letting me help them to choose something in keeping with the place. I'm rather proud of the result. Wouldn't you like to see over the house?'

" 'I'd rather have my own things,' I said, very stiffly; but I felt rather ashamed; she'd been so kind. So I said: 'All the same, I'd very much like to see the house.' "

"She brightened up again at that. Of course, she knew I'd never be able to hold out for my shabby old furniture once I'd seen what she had to show me. She took me through flat after flat—every one different, and every one so charming, I could hardly believe my eyes and I felt how silly I had been to insist on having my own shabby, ugly, old things.

"After we had seen about a dozen flats, the Secretary took me across the garden—I was astonished to find what a lovely garden they had made in so short a time—and out into the street, where I saw a great new building with a big sign: 'Soviet Furnishing Depôt.' We went in and she told the store-keeper there, that we wanted to look at furniture. 'You know you'll have to get some things for the present. It will be ever so long before your furniture will be fumigated and brought over, and, in any case, these rooms are larger than you were in before, so you would need some extras anyway,' she said to me.

"I made no further objections, but just threw myself into the business of getting the prettiest things I could find. The Secretary was very helpful, and always insisted that I should have the nicest and most serviceable things. The woodwork and plaster had purposely been left uncoloured for the incoming tenant to choose how it should be done. The Secretary got my card for the hotel extended for a week, in order that our rooms might be decorated before we moved in.

"So I found myself in a Co-operative house."

(To be continued.)

The Provisioning of Petrograd.

DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD PRODUCTS.

The system of Communist economy differs from the economic conditions of Capitalist society: in place of the anarchy in production and free competition, it establishes as the basis for the construction of all life, a complete inventory, made in accordance with a certain plan, of all the products and articles of consumption of the greatest necessity, as well as of their distribution.

At present, when the food crisis, determined by the world war of five years, is at its height, the regulation by the State of provisioning and the distribution of food acquired a capital importance, for the quantity of available food products and other articles of consumption is insufficient to satisfy all needs, thus necessitating a certain classification in their distribution.

Under such conditions, the application of the principle of the inventory prevails most completely in the great centres of consumption, first of which is our Red capital. Despite a considerable diminution of the population, a diminution produced by temporary causes, the total number of inhabitants in Petrograd is not below a million, of which about 250,000 are children. The entire mass of the population receives food products and articles of prime necessity, although in very small quantity, through the aid of a single organ—the Commune of Unified Consumption of Petrograd. This body is little by little enlarging its sphere of activity and aims to meet all the needs of the working population of the city. At the present time the Commune of Consumption is organised upon the following principal foundations of the economic system:—

1. The concentration of baking, by which all the bread for a million of the population of the capital is baked in the minimum number of places: eight factories for bread making, and eleven bakeries.
2. Communal feeding with a large net-work of refectories for children in particular, and feeding stations near institutions, etc., in which most of the working population may eat.
3. A system of distribution by depots, Community shops, and distributing stations, from which products are distributed by card, the products being other than those destined for the "food commune."
4. A system for the distribution of articles of prime necessity, among which are: raw and manufactured tobacco, matches, soap, oil, etc.
5. The distribution of clothes, shoes, fabrics, and other articles of prime necessity.
6. The feeding of cattle with fodder and other foods.

In this manner, the Commune of Petrograd is a real centre, affecting all sides of the life of the working population of the city. This centre directs an enormous technical system which, in turn, is divided into separate branches, sections, auxiliaries, etc.

All food products, all fodder, etc., arriving at Petrograd and addressed to the Commune of Consumption, are allotted at the moment of their storage in their depots—inventoried by the organisation of distribution. They are then transferred upon special orders and according to established rations.

On the average, there pass each month, through the system of the distributing organisation, one million poods* of products.

Following is an approximate table of the daily distribution of products by the distributing organisation of the Commune of Petrograd:

The bread is delivered daily, in accordance with established rations, to the amount of 15,000 poods. Next come the following products, delivered to the Communal refectories and the food stations: the vegetables which are daily distributed to the amount of 10,000 poods, the fish 4,000 poods daily, various groats almost 2,000 poods, fats distributed according to the quantity available, etc.

Bread is distributed to the population according to the ration calculated for two days. The products are delivered to the communal refectories and the institutions twice monthly, according to the established rations of consumption.

*1 pood—36 lbs.

SYLVIA PANKHURST.

Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst was received with enthusiasm when she addressed a meeting in Petrograd, on her way to the Congress of the Third International.

ELECTIONS TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. — By N. LENIN.

(Continued from last issue.)

III.

Before passing to that most important of questions—that of the attitude of the proletariat to the working non-proletarian masses—it is first necessary to consider the question of the army.

During the whole course of the imperialist war the flower of the popular forces was concentrated within the army. Although the opportunist chiefs of the Second International (not only the social-chauvinists, that is the Scheidemann-Renaudel group who had passed completely over to the side of "national defence," but also the "centrists") consented by word and deed to the submission of the army to the German and Anglo-French groups of imperialist bandits, the true revolutionary proletarians did not forget the words of Marx pronounced in 1871: "The bourgeoisie will teach the proletarians how to manage armies!" The Austro-German and Anglo-French-Russian renegades from Socialism might talk of national defence, but the revolutionary proletariat was devoting all its efforts to turning the army, into a revolutionary force to be used *against* the bandits of bourgeois imperialism; it was striving to transform the war of the imperialists into a just and legitimate war of the proletariat and oppressed workers of each country against "their own national" bourgeoisie.

The social-traitors took good care not to aid in this preparation of the army for use against imperialist governments of each country.

The Bolsheviki, however, from the beginning of 1914, performed their work of propaganda, agitation, and clandestine organisation. The social-traitors, the Kautzkys and Scheidemanns of all nations, might well talk of the demoralisation of the army through Bolshevik propaganda; we, however, are *proud* of having demoralised the most powerful enemy of our class, by depriving him in the height of war of the armed masses of workers and peasants, and diverting them into the struggle against the exploiters.

The results of our work made itself felt in the elections to the National Assembly in November, 1917, in which the army participated.

Here are the principal results of the elections as cited by N. V. Sviatitsky:—

Number of Votes (in thousands) received at the Elections to the Constituent Assembly in November, 1917.

Subdivision of the Army and of the Fleet.	S.R.	Bolsheviki.	Cadets.	Nat. Groups.	T'l.
North Front	240	480	—	60†	780
West Front	180	653	16	125	976
S.E. Front	402	300	13	290	1007
Roumanian Front	679	167	21	260	1128
Caucasian Front ...	360	60	—	—	420
Baltic Fleet	—	120*	—	—	*120
Black Sea Fleet ...	22	10	—	19	52
Totals	1883	1790	50	754	4483

The total for the Social-Revolutionaries is 1,885,000, for the Bolsheviki 1,671,000. If to this last figure one adds the 120,000 votes (approximate) from the Black Sea Fleet, one gets 1,791,000 votes.

The Bolsheviki obtained a number of votes *slightly less* than the Social-Revolutionaries.

The army, therefore, in October-November, 1917, was *more than half conquered* by the Bolsheviki.

Without this we should never have been victors.

But with almost half of the votes in the army in general, we could count a decided superiority on the fronts near to, or not far distant from, the capitals. If from the totals the figures for the Caucasian front are deducted, the Bolsheviki possess more votes than the Social-Revolutionaries; and if the North and the West fronts alone are considered, the Bolsheviki will be found to have *more than a million votes* against 420,000 for the Social-Revolutionaries.

Consequently, in the army also, towards November, 1917, the Bolsheviki possessed a *political column of assault* which assured them an overwhelming superiority at the decisive point and at the decisive instant. There could be no question of the army offering the least resistance to the proletarian revolution of October, and the conquest of power by the proletariat, for on the North and West fronts we possessed an enormous majority, while on the more distant fronts we had the time and the opportunity to win the peasant masses from the Social-Revolutionaries—of which we will speak later.

IV.

We have studied three conditions for the victory of Bolshevism based on the figures for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. (1) The overwhelming majority for the Bolsheviki among the proletariat; (2) the same among the army; (3) the certitude of a crushing superiority of numbers at the decisive moment at the decisive point—that is, in the capitals and on the fronts nearest to the centre.

But these conditions would have given us only a momentary and precarious victory, if the Bolsheviks had not known how to bring the majority of the non-proletarian working masses over to their side from the Social-Revolutionaries and other petty-bourgeois parties.

That was the essential.

The chief reason for the incapacity of the "Socialists" (that is, petty-bourgeois democrats) of the Second International to comprehend the proletarian dictatorship is precisely because they do not understand that political power in the hands of the proletarian class should be used as a means of attracting to its side the masses of non-proletarian workers, and of winning these masses from the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois parties.

The "Socialists" of the Second International are full of petty bourgeois prejudices and have forgotten the cardinal teachings of Marx. They consider *the power of the Government* a thing tabooed, to be approached only by universal suffrage—the absolute eqivalent of "consistent democracy" (as this sort of nonsense is called). They cannot see that this power is only a *weapon* which different classes can, and must, use *in furtherance of their own class interests.*

The bourgeoisie makes use of government power as a weapon of the capitalist class against the workers, even in the most democratic of bourgeois republics. The renegades from Marx have forgotten this.

The proletariat, after having sufficiently organised its political and military "shock" troops, must overthrow the bourgeoisie and deprive it of political power, and then use this *weapon* in the service of its own class aims.

And what are the class aims of the proletariat?

To crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie;

To "neutralise" the peasant class, and, as far as possible, to attract it (at any rate, the working portion) to the side of the proletariat;

To organise on a uniform system the large industries expropriated from the bourgeoisie, utilising all the means of production for this purpose;

To organise Socialism on the ruins of Capitalism.

Messieurs the opportunists—and with them men of the calibre of Kautsky—"teach" the people, contrary to the teaching of Marx, that the proletariat must first conquer the majority by means of universal suffrage, then, basing themselves on this majority, receive political power; and next, always on the basis of consistent democracy (sometimes called "pure" democracy), lay the foundations of Socialism.

We, on the contrary, basing ourselves on the teaching of Marx and the experiences of the Russian Revolution, declare:—

The proletariat must first overthrow the bourgeoisie and *conquer* political power; it must then use this political power, that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a means of gaining the sympathy of the majority of the workers.

How can governmental power in the hands of the proletariat become a means of exerting influence upon the working masses and of attracting them away from the bourgeoisie to the side of the workers?

The proletariat achieves its aim not by utilising the old machinery of government, but by destroying it completely. It creates a new apparatus, in spite of the jeremiads of the terrified petty-bourgeois and the threats of saboteurs. This new apparatus is adapted to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to the struggle it is waging against the bourgeoisie for the support of the proletarian masses. This new apparatus has not been invented; it was *produced* by the class war. This new mechanism of government, this new type of political power, is the *power of the Soviets.*

The Russian proletariat, having conquered political power, proclaimed at once—within a few hours—the dissolution of the whole ancient State apparatus (which, as Marx showed, had been adopted throughout the centuries to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie,—even in the most democratic of republics), and transferred *all power to the Soviets.*

The proletariat can, and must, immediately deprive the democratic petty-bourgeois of their masses, that is, the masses that follow them. It conquers them by satisfying, in a revolutionary manner, their essential economic needs at the cost of the expropriation of the landed proprietors, and of the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie cannot do this, however great the power of government at its disposal may be.

But once it has seized power the proletariat can do so, since it possesses the necessary apparatus (the Soviets) and the economic means (the expropriation of the landed proprietors and of the bourgeoisie).

It was precisely in this manner that the Russian proletariat *conquered* the peasant class, literally *within a few hours* after the seizure of political power. A few hours after the victory over the bourgeoisie, the triumphant proletariat at Petrograd published the "Decree Relating to Land," which decree, by expropriating the large estates totally and without indemnity, immediately satisfied the essential needs of the *majority* of the peasants with a rapidity, energy, and resolution which was wholly revolutionary.

In order to prove to the peasants that the proletarians, instead of wishing to govern, desired to help them as friends, the victorious Bolsheviki did not introduce a word of their own into the decree relating to land, but confined themselves to copying word for word the scheduled claims of the most revolutionary peasants, as published by the Social-Revolutionaries in their own journals.

The Social-Revolutionaries were outraged, indignant, exasperated; they declared the Bolsheviki had "robbed them of their programme." They only succeeded in inciting laughter. It is a charming state of affairs when a party has to be hounded out of government in order that all that is revolutionary, all that is beneficial to the workers in its own programme, may be put into effect. This is a process which the representatives of the Second International have never been able to understand, namely, that the proletariat can be victorious without conquering a majority of the population. To limit or condition this victory to the acquisition of a majority of votes at an electoral contest *under bourgeois domination* is evidence of chronic intellectual indolence, or else, quite simply, of a desire to deceive the workers. In order to bring the majority over to its side, the proletariat must first overthrow the bourgeoisie and take possession of the power of government, and then, after having destroyed the old State apparatus, introduce the Soviet system, whereby the domination and authority of the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats over the non-proletarian labouring masses is at once nullified. It must finally *complete* the destruction of the influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois democrats over the *majority* of the non-proletarian labouring masses by satisfying their economic needs *in a revolutionary manner,* at the expense of the exploiters.

Naturally, all this is possible only at a certain stage of capitalist evolution. Without this fundamental condition the proletariat cannot achieve its formation into a distinct class, nor derive success from its long preparation, discipline, and education through long years of strikes, demonstrations and struggle against opportunists. Without this fundamental condition cannot be developed the political and economic importance of the centres, the conquest of which by the proletariat is equivalent to the conquest of political power. Without this fundamental condition there cannot exist that approximation and parity of situation between the proletarian and the non-proletarian workers which is indispensable if the one is to influence and act successfully on behalf of the other.

(To be continued.)

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* Approximate figure: 2 Bolsheviki were elected. N. V. Sviatsky adopts an average of 60,000 votes per deputy, which leads me to indicate the number as 120,000.

† No information is available as to which party received the 19,000 votes of the Black Sea Fleet. The remaining figures in the column seem to refer almost exclusively to Ukrainian Socialists, 10 having been elected together with one Menshevik.

PREPARING FOR THE REVOLUTION.

The Sheffield police are protesting against military drill being part of their training. They are trained in military barracks, and made to go through every movement that the "Tommy" learns. They regard the new drill as a symbol, and are afraid that the force will become like the R.I.C. in Ireland. Last June instructions in firearms were ordered for the Metropolitan Police, and there are rumours that a northern police force has been armed with rifles and 3,000 rounds of ball cartridge. On entering a Metropolitan Police Station recently, a respectable citizen was confronted by a constable in uniform, who pointed a rifle at him, and did not lower it until he had stated his business. Meanwhile the Firearms Bill has been passed in the House of Commons, which provides that no one may be in possession of firearms, ammunition, bombs, etc., without a certificate from the chief officer of the police of the district. Have the workers been asked to sanction this?

THE DEATH MOUNDS.

By L. A. Motler.

Deep as they slumber,
Deep in the greensward,
Still are they living—
Are not the dead ours
Ever and ever?

Ashes that smoulder
Glow with the breezes,
Quicken with storm-winds,
Flame with the tempest,
Ever and ever.

Roses of yest'reen
Bear us their scents yet,
Songs that they sang us
Ring in remembrance
Ever and ever.

Out of the death-mounds
Burst forth the flowerings
Fresh in the springtime,
Speaking to us all
Ever and ever.

Nor is their message
Weary or dreary,
Hope is eternal,
Freedom the urge still
Ever and ever.

"HANDS OFF RUSSIA" DEMONSTRATION.

KING EDWARD'S PARK, HARLESDEN
(near Harlesden Road),
SUNDAY, AUGUST 29th, at 3.30 p.m.

Speakers:

Jack Tanner (just returned from Russia).
L. Tribe, Willesden Labour Party.
W. Jeffries, Willesden Labour Party.
Councillor Greengrass, Paddington Labour Party.
" H. Roberts, Paddington Labour Party.
" S. P. Viant, Labour Candidate for Willesden.
" W. Hill, N.U.R.
F. Tyler, Hands Off Russia Committee.
G. Emmens, I.L.P.
A. Smith, N.U.R.
M. Kavanagh, Solidarity Group.
Davies Lloyd, W. Middlesex Trades Council.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Congress of the Third International.

Moscow, August 8th.—At the second sitting of the Congress, with Serrati in the chair, the report of the Commission, which was elected by the Communist Party, was adopted. A long resolution, divided into eighteen paragraphs, on the proletarian revolution, was passed.

There was a lively discussion on the admission of the German Independent Socialists and the French Socialist Party to the Third International. The Dutch delegates opposed it, whilst Radek, Bukharin and Zinoviev were in favour of their admission. In the end, the majority of the Congress approved of their admission, in a consultative capacity. The American Socialist Party was excluded.

Afterwards the Congress discussed the setting up of seven committees, each composed of fifteen members. (1) Parliamentary; (2) Syndicalist; (3) National and Colonial questions; (4) Agrarian questions; (5) Formation of sections and admission to the Communist International; (6) Regulations for the organisations of youth and women; (7) present Communist position of the world.—*Avanti.*

Czecho-Slovakia and Poland.

Berlin, August 9th.—The President of the Czech Socialist Party, Nemec, states that the Czecho-Slovak troops which have returned from Siberia are not only absolutely opposed to all military operations, but even more so to reinforcing the Polish front. He added: "The Bohemian workers are resolutely opposed to any war. Further, our republic is in friendly relationship with the Soviet Republic. Rather are we in conflict with Poland, which precludes any possibility of Czech help to that State. We may add that the Trades Unionists have sent a delegate to Moscow, and that the Czecho-Slovak Socialist Party, which came out of the Second International, exercises a preponderant influence in Parliament.

News comes from Galicia that the Bolshevik army in Eastern Galicia comprises a Hungarian division, estimated at 20,000 men, whose chief task is to oppose the advance of a Magyar army, which Horthy will eventually send against Soviet Russia.—*Avanti.*

Polish Workers are Bolshevists.

The largest newspaper of Warsaw, *Rzecz Pospulitu*, reports Paderewski as saying:—"The working-class of Poland is foul and traitorous, it is in agreement with the enemy; it is necessary to bathe it in a sea of the workers' blood."—*Avanti.*

A Decree on the Elimination of Illiteracy.

[The following decree on the elimination of illiteracy among the population of the Russian Soviet Republic appeared in *Izvestia*, Petrograd, on December 30th, 1919.]

MOSCOW, December 29th (Rosta).—In order to enable the entire population of the Republic to participate consciously in the political life of the country, the Soviet of People's Commissars decrees:

1. That all citizens of the Republic, between the ages of eight and fifty, who cannot read and write, must learn to read and write in their native tongue or in Russian, as they may choose. Such courses are given in the existing government schools, as well as in those which are now being organised for the illiterate elements of the population in accordance with the plans of the Peoples' Commissariat of Education.

Note.—This decree extends to the Red Guards. Responsible work in the military units is carried on with the direct participation of the Political Departments of the Red Army and Navy.

2. The period of time in which illiteracy is to be eliminated shall be determined by the provincial and city Soviets of Deputies, respectively. The general plans for the elimination of illiteracy in the localities are to be worked out by the organs of the People's Commissariat of Education within two months from the publication of this decree.

3. The People's Commissariat of Education and its local organs have the right to call the literate elements of the population, which were not recruited, for the purpose of teaching the illiterates. They are to be called in the compulsory labour order and are to be remunerated in accordance with the standard of educational workers.

4. All organisations of the toiling population, such as: trade unions, local branches of the Russian Communist Party, unions of the communistic youth, etc., are called by the People's Commissariat of Education to participate in the elimination of illiteracy.

5. If those who are taught to read and write are employed (except those working in military organisations), their working days are made two hours shorter for the period of learning, and they receive full wages.

6. For the purpose of eliminating illiteracy the organs of the People's Commissariat of Education are given the right to utilise public-houses, churches, clubs, private houses, appropriate space at the factories and works of the Soviet Government, etc.

7. The supply organisations are ordered to give preference to the needs of the organisations combatting illiteracy before the needs of other organisations.

8. Those who disregard the rulings of this decree and prevent the illiterates from attending schools, are held liable under criminal law.

9. The People's Commissariat of Education is to issue within two weeks detailed instructions for the execution of this decree.

Chairman of the Soviet of People's Commissars: Vladimir Ulianov (Lenin).

Chief Clerk: Bonch-Bruevich.

Secretary: Brichkina.

Norwegian Port "Red."

Moscow reported on the 16th that at Trondjem a Socialist Republic has been declared, and power is stated to be in the hands of the Soviets.

International Seamen's Congress.

The International Seamen's Congress at Brussels passed a resolution refusing to transport either troops or munitions in order to prevent future wars. This measure will be applicable to the Russo-Polish conflict.

Bela Kun in Petrograd.

Bela Kun has reached Petrograd, where a special meeting of the Soviet was held to welcome him.

Direct Action in Germany.

On July 28th several thousand workmen of the Höchst Dye Works forced their way into the Directors' office. They presented a long list of demands and insisted upon their immediate acceptance. Added to a considerable increase in wages, amongst other things they demanded that the Workers' Council should take over the 10 per cent. deducted for rates, and the alteration of the working hours. When the Directors pointed out that the demands had to be negotiated by constitutional means, some of the workers had recourse to action, and three of the Directors were roughly handled and were badly hurt. Under the weight of the surging crowd, part of the balustrade of the principal entrance gave way, and several people were crushed under it; one was killed, and two were badly injured. The Directors were helpless before the threatening crowd, and were forced to grant the demands on the spot.

BETWEEN OURSELVES. By L. A. MOTLER.

President Wilson is President of the United States, and maybe he would like to be President of Mexico as well. He is the man who diddled the Germans into armisticing over the Fourteen Points, and then made himself ill at Versailles trying to explain them away. According to a writer in *Gale's Magazine*, of Mexico City, he is being slowly poisoned by Jesuits; but possibly he is only trying to eat his own words.

You will remember, Henry, that on September 5th, 1919, the famous author of "The New Freedom" (during whose beneficient rule, Debs, Rose Pastor Stokes, Jim Larkin, and thousands of "anarchist conspirators" were gaoled, and other thousands of C.O.'s were subjected to the most revolting tortures, whilst I.W.W. men were lynched, beaten, tarred and feathered) made the following speech:—

"The real reason that the war we have just finished took place was that Germany (i.e., German Capitalists) was afraid her commercial rivals were going to get the better of her, and the reason why some of the nations went into the war against Germany was that they thought Germany would get the commercial advantage of them. The war in its inception was a commercial and industrial war. It was not a political war."

If we are to take it that a "political war" means a war to make the world safe for democracy, then, according to Wilson himself, the thousands of young Americans who fell on the fields of France and Flanders simply died for the sake of Big Business.

All this stuff is pretty stale by now, but it is just a reminder that even Wilson so far forgets himself as to tell the truth sometimes. And further these are a few preliminary remarks to show the kind of stuff this putative father of the League of Nations is made of.

This alleged Scotsman was too proud to fight, and immediately afterwards pocketed his pride; he kept the nation out of the war only to plunge them up to the neck in it, soon after he had been re-elected to the Presidency, on what rude people would call false pretences. Supposing of course any politician ever gets elected for being truthful and promise-keeping, like the man who was going to hang the Kaiser.

One of Wilson's points was self-determination, and he has carried out his idea of the same to the extent of collecting all the "Reds" he could find and rushing them out of the sweet land of Lie-berty. And now he writes some stuff about "strongly recoiling" from the 'orrors of Bolshevism. "These men," he says of the present rulers of Russia, "do not rule by the will or consent of any considerable proportion of the Russian people." And this, he adds, is an incontestable fact. This kind of fact is a lie and a half, Henry, my lad.

And I may add that I have here a cutting by me from my favourite capitalist newspaper, to the effect that THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS MORE POWER THAN ANY EUROPEAN AUTOCRAT, NOT EVEN EXCLUDING THE LATE CZAR HIMSELF. He is the Big Joss beside whom the ex-Kaiser is merely a workshop gaffer. And to show the truly democratic way in which he was elected to stand as President, it may be mentioned that it took over forty ballots before his devoted followers could be wangled for a majority. And if they went home sober, it was because the rye-whiskey shops were shut.

President Woodpile Wilson is perhaps not on very good terms with his late Allies, the British. That is natural. When a man sees any of his creditors, he usually dodges across the road. But you may be sure Wilson would tell you England was the freest country in the world—always excepting America. She is anyway a sight freer than Russia, where Lenin and Trotsky couldn't scrape a majority at a bye election, but seem to have the poor Russian people under the 'fluence of their eagle optics, and perhaps a few thousand bayonets.

London is the capital of the greatest empire the world has ever put up with, and here the beloved and trusty leige lord and sovereign George Wettin—pardon, Windsor—rules over a crowd of seven millions, crammed together in a way that would put a sardine out of its misery. And these seven millions so love their leige lord and master, their respected and honourable members of the Government, that it is necessary to keep an army of 10,000 picked troops in case they get too loving.

And this is no idle phantasy, or a story issued by Kameneff and Krassin as part of their Bolshie propaganda. The facts are here given by that dud Napoleon, Brimstone Churchill. There are 9,804 men and 757 officers under arms in the London district, a total of 10,561, distributed as follows:—

Grenadier Guards—Tower and Wimbledon.
Life Guards—Windsor and Hyde Park.
Coldstream Guards—Chelsea, Wellington Barracks, and Pirbright.
Royal Horse Guards—Regents Park.
Scots Guards—Wimbledon and Windsor.
Irish Guards—Chelsea.
Welsh Guards—Warley.
Royal Horse Artillery—St. John's Wood.

DESERTER SET FREE.

David Summerfield, a young Russian, gave himself up at the Central Recruiting Office, Whitehall, as a deserter from the British Army. Two years ago, while home on leave, he yielded to the wishes of his wife, who was very nervous, and failed to return to the Army. After the war he waited in expectation of a general amnesty, but the suspense becoming too trying, he at last gave himself up. His solicitor, Mr. Scott Duckers, placed the facts before the authorities, and Summerfield, on being released from three-days' detention, received the usual protection which is given to all demobilised men.

IS IT WAR WITH RUSSIA?

Now is the time to buy Russian literature, and educate your mates in the workshop.

The following pamphlets can be supplied at 25 per cent. discount for twelve copies or more; postage extra; cash on delivery:—

	Each.	Doz.
Soviets for the British, by L. A. Motler	1½d.	1/1
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Hands Off Russia, by Israel Zangwill ...	2d.	1/6
The Truth About Russia, Ransome ...	4d.	3/-
Questions and Answers About Russia, by A. Rhys Williams...	4d.	3/-
Red Russia: Book I., by John Reed ...	6d.	4/6
Red Russia: Book II., ditto ditto	4d.	3/-
To British Workers (Leaflet on the Soviets in Britain)	1d.	4½d.
The Soviets of the Street (An Appeal to Working Women), by Sylvia Pankhurst	1d.	4½d.
Lloyd George Takes The Mask Off, by Sylvia Pankhurst	1d.	9d.

obtainable from:—

THE COMMUNIST PARTY,
400, Old Ford Road, London, E.3.

	Each.	Doz.
Russian Soviet Constitution	3d.	2/3
An Eye-Witness from Russia, by J. Rickman, M.A.	3d.	2/3
Russia and the Allies, by F. Seymour Cocks	3d.	2/3
The Russian Code of Labour Laws ...	3d.	2/3
A Year in Soviet Russia	2d.	1/6
The Aims of the Bolsheviki, by B. Shumiatzki	2d.	1/6
Maxim Litvinoff on Soviet Russia ...	1d.	9d
An Open Letter to Lenin. From the Finnish Communist Party	1d.	9d
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British Troops in the Caucasus ...	1d.	6d
A Sketch of the Russian Trade Union Movement	1d.	9d
Social Reconstruction in Russia (Child Welfare)	½d.	4½d
Lenin's Views on the Revolution ...	½d.	4½d
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Peasant Communes: Progress of Communism in Russian Villages ...	½d.	4½d
My Impressions of Soviet Russia, by G. Lansbury	1d.	9d
Laws of the Russian Republic on Marriage, Divorce, etc.	9d.	6/9
Education in Soviet Russia	1d.	9d
The Great Initiative, by N. Lenin ...	½d.	4½d

obtainable from:—

PEOPLE'S RUSSIAN INFORMATION BUREAU,
152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

TOPICAL NOTES.

Infantile Sickness of the "Left."

Nicholai Lenin has certainly added to the gaiety of Communism by his treatise under this head. Whatever his brilliance of leadership of the Russian movement, his knowledge and judgment of British Communism is badly deficient.

To argue a tactics for revolutionaries over here from Russian tactics in the Russian Duma is unsound. The Russian Duma itself was, but a few short years before, won from Czardom through revolutionary effort. The experience Russians had had of a "Constituent Assembly" was therefore very limited and incomplete. Here every worker has had a bellyful of our hoary old institution of Parliament. -His father had a bellyful before him. And his grandfather away before him. British workers are far from being the political babes Comrade Lenin seems to imagine.

A clear-cut call of "Down with Parliament, all Power to the Soviets," may well be made in six months time, if we get to work, and not after Henderson and Thomas, with their palliative dope, have endeavoured to queer the pitch. The fact that the Capitalists *want* the workers everywhere to participate in Parliament, *want* them to send Henderson, Thomas, and the group of fakirs, lawyers, Liberals, and other political sycophants who constitute the Labour Party, to power, is a good enough argument for us not to want them to do anything so suicidal to revolutionary triumph.

I sincerely trust that the "great influence" that some leaders wielded in the past, will be wielded by no future individual in the movement. British Revolutionary Communism, if I interpret its spirit aright, stands, probably more than the Communism of any other country, for strict discipline and subordination of ego to the movement, accurate infection by delegates of the letter and spirit of their instructions. Brilliant individual efforts from the star turns of the team are not wanted. Solid combination and sound team work are what the rank and file stand for. The sooner the whole movement is built up from bottom to top on sound Soviet principles, with recall of all delegates and persons entrusted with executive posts by the body delegating such powers to them, with strict Party control of all such delegates, the healthier for the movement.

National Inaugural Conference.

At the preliminary conference of our Party, we did no more than lay down the keel for a genuine British revolutionary party. That keel was laid aright. On September 25th and 26th the National Inaugural Conference will be held. The Preliminary Conference can in no way be said to have been representative of British Communism. The coming National Conference will, I trust, repair this error.

Will all Communist groups please note that at this coming Conference all groups participating will have fullest power on the basis of a card vote. They have full power to choose a new name for the Party, choose a new Party organ, choose a new Secretary—in a word, do everything except tamper with that keel of the seven principles of British Communism laid down in June. The Provisional Organising Council automatically goes out of office with the holding of the September Conference, at Manchester.

At present there is no revolutionary party in the country worth a revolutionary button. But the elements exist for the forging of such a weapon in the shape of Communist groups in Scotland, in Wales, in England, everywhere in fact, and we call on them to unite with us for this work.

Sylvia Pankhurst's Communist Party.

News reaches me from all sides that considerable prejudice exists against this Party, from the assumption that it is a hole-and-corner affair, and a pocket possession of the editor of the *Dreadnought*.

To put the matter quite plainly, Comrade Pankhurst is one out of a Provisional Organising Council of 30, and she has one voice and one vote on that Council. That Council contains a sufficient majority of sound industrialist comrades to suppress very forcibly the domination of any individual, should such a proceeding ever be attempted. The Party has no chairman, and myself, as Secretary, never set eyes on Comrade Pankhurst in my life until I went to the Preliminary Conference. The Party office is situated some eleven miles from Old Ford Road, and at no time, has any comrade, ex-W.S.F. or otherwise, attempted to meddle with me in carrying out the instructions of the Organising Council. In any event the non-W.S.F. element in the Party already exceeds the ex-W.S.F. element, and Communist groups may frankly co-operate in the coming Conference, fully assured that no domination will be offered them from without, that the Conference will appoint its own chairman from among the delegates, and manage its own business through its own standing orders committee, and in every way be completely free to forge and found a genuine revolutionary party for British Communists, without any section, group, or individuals imposing "prior claims" of any character whatever.

EDGAR T. WHITEHEAD.

CONSCIENCE MONEY.

If you are a convinced Communist, and wish to help the working-class Communist movement, listen to the voice of your conscience, and send along your shilling every week to the Hon. Treasurer, Percy Wallis 18, Angel Road, Hammersmith, W.6.

COMMUNIST PARTY

British Section of the Third International.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP.—The acceptance of the following points: (1) The complete overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Communism. (2) The Class struggle. (3) The Dictatorship of the Proletariat. (4) The Soviet or Revolutionary Workers' Council system. (5) Affiliation to the Third International. (6) Refusal to engage in Parliamentary Action. (7) Non-affiliation to the Labour Party.

MINIMUM WEEKLY SUBSCRIPTION: Threepence.

Provisional Secretary: EDGAR T. WHITEHEAD, 8, Sinclair Gardens, West Kensington, London, W.14.

Branches' notes and list of meetings, sent in for publication, should reach the Secretary not later than first post Thursday morning.—All articles and news matter (other than Branches' notes) to be sent to: 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, London, E.3. and marked: "The Editor, The Workers' Dreadnought."

The "WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT" may be obtained for sale at 3/-per quire (26 copies). Usual Trade rates for wholesale and retail newsagents.

All Members should make a special effort to see that our paper is on sale and posters displayed at local newsagents, trade union branches, in the workshop and at all public meetings in their districts.

Will Branch Secretaries kindly note that all notices of meetings for publication must reach the Secretary by last post Wednesday preceding week of publication.

LONDON MEETINGS: OUTDOOR.

Thursday, August 19th. 7.30 p.m., The Grove, Hammersmith. Hammersmith Branch Propaganda Meeting, and each following Thursday.

Friday, August 20th. Kingston Market Place, 8 p.m. Comrades Bishop and French.

Saturday, August 21st. 8 p.m. Kingston Station. Comrade Meacham and others.

Sunday, August 22nd. Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11 a.m. Minnie Bitch, David Maguire and others. Dock Gates, 7 p.m. Jack Sullivan and others.

Wednesday, August 25th, 7.30 p.m. Grove Lane, Camberwell. Mrs. C. Cole.

INDOOR.

Wednesday, August 25th, 8.15 p.m. Soho Branch Inaugural Meeting. 58, Old Compton Street, Soho, W.

COMMUNIST PARTY NOTES.

Manchester.

Comrade Elder reports that a house-to-house campaign among the workers is in full swing with excellent results. Hundreds of householders have been interviewed, especially those people whom the public orator never reaches. Comrade Elder further reports that in his opinion "the lower strata of the proletariat can be best seen and spoken to, not in the public square nor public hall, but in its dug-out. Public pulpiting generally attracts converted followers without touching the fringe of the great mass, whom we desire, not merely to touch, but to redden." Comrades of all branches who desire to see the Social Soviets in being, cannot do better than copy this vital tactics which gives scope for every live Communist.

Corton.

Forty-eight *Dreadnoughts* were sold in a week. The Branch excluded S. H. Raines from membership.

Hammersmith.

The inaugural meeting was held on Monday, Aug. 9th. The branch kicks off with fourteen members. Business meetings are held fortnightly at Raper Hall, Cambridge Road, King Street, Hammersmith. Next meeting takes place on Monday, August 30th, at 8 p.m.; propaganda meetings, Thursdays, at 7.30, at The Grove, Hammersmith. Secretary, Comrade H. Biske, 22, Rockley Road, Shepherds Bush, W.

Stonebridge Park.

The Party Secretary visited this branch on Wednesday, August 11th, outlining tactics for Communists for the immediate future. An excellent discussion followed.

Birmingham.

Comrade R. Harvey, 314, High Street, Birmingham, has been appointed hon. organiser for Birmingham for the Party. Will all revolutionary Communists in Birmingham get into touch with this comrade and rally to make a clear-cut call for genuine revolutional Communism.

Barking.

A members' meeting will be held on Wednesday, 25th August, at Glenhurst, Ripple Road, Barking. Intending members invited.

Portsmouth.

This branch is handicapped by lack of good propagandist speakers. Unemployment in the town affords excellent opportunity for Communist work. Unattached local Communists are asked to get into touch with Secretary Marsh, 12, St. John's Road, Fratton, Portsmouth.

Abertillery.

Will Wintle, 13, Rosebery Avenue, Abertillery, wants to form a Branch Communist Group. Will all local Comrades get into touch with this Comrade.

Bow.

The Bow Branch meets at 400, Old Ford Road on Thursdays at 7.30. All members and intending members are invited to attend.

Camberwell.

Literature sales weeks ending August 1st, £3 15s.; August 8th, £3 17s. 1d.. "Dreadnought" sales, 208 and 169. Comrades, come in and beat us!

Additions to National Organising Council.

F. Sanders, engineering worker, Middlesex; G. H. Crouch, electrical worker, North London; H. Biske, worker in printing trades, West London. The Provisional Organising Council now number twenty-six. Of this number twenty are industrial workers, or more than seventy-five per cent. This is as it should be in a genuine Communist Party.

The "DREADNOUGHT" OFFICE has a few back numbers of the paper. Comrades willing to distribute these in the workshop, etc., should apply to the *Dreadnought* Office, 152, Fleet Street.

Recommendations For September Conference.

1. In view of the fact that the Preliminary Conference of the Party held June 19th and 20th was not fully representative of British Communism, every effort should be made to make this NATIONAL INAUGURAL CONFERENCE fully representative.

2. With this in view, we recommend that all Communist Groups in the country accepting the main principles for British Communism laid down at the preliminary conference, be invited to participate in the September Conference.

The seven principles are:—

1. The complete overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Communism;
2. The class-struggle;
3. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat;
4. The Soviet or revolutionary Workers' Council system;
5. Affiliation to the Third International;
6. The refusal to run candidates for Parliament;
7. Non-affiliation to the Labour Party.

3. Voting in this NATIONAL INAUGURAL CONFERENCE shall be by card vote, each delegate voting the numerical strength of his Communist group.

4. It shall be made abundantly clear through the medium of the Party Organ, that this September Conference will have power—

To choose a new name for the Party;
To choose a new Secretary for the Party;
To choose a new Party organ;
To establish its own system for control of the Party and the Party Organ;
To decide where the head office shall be;
To alter the rates of contribution; in a word: to do everything to found a thoroughly representative Party of British Revolutionary Communists on the basis of the seven main principles laid down at the Preliminary Conference.

5. We recommend that at the Conference a Chairman be elected from among the delegates, and that immediately following a Standing Orders Committee be elected, into whose hands will be placed all recommendations, amendments, and future business for the Conference.

Following this a printed report shall be then read on behalf of the Provisional Organising Council of the Party, outlining the present position.

The Standing Orders Committee will then report, and future business of the Conference will be guided by its recommendations.

The Agenda Committee further recommends:—

6. That a scheme be laid before the Conference for its consideration, arranging for the Government of the Party on a basis of Soviet principles, namely, that the Central Governing Body of the Party consist of a body of delegates, each one elected by a district group of branches. The nominee for the Central Governing Body shall be chosen by a District Committee consisting of one delegate from each Branch or group in the district elected by proportional representation.

Every member of the Central Governing Body of the Party shall be liable at any time to recall and substitution by the district committee electing him.

The Party Secretary, Party Editor, and any other Comrades working for the Party, shall be elected by card vote at the Conference. They shall be liable to control, suspension, and substitution by the Central Governing Body of the Council, who may appoint temporary substitutes until a new election can be carried out.

HALL TO LET: STONEBRIDGE PARK.

An excellent small HALL will be LET CHEAPLY to Clubs, Trades Union Branches, etc., for MEETINGS. Low charges. Seventy Seats. Situated in Milton Avenue, Stonebridge Park.—Applications to Branch Secretary, COMRADE H. DOWNES, 89, Milton Avenue, Stonebridge Park, N.W.

SOHO BRANCH.

AN INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL BRANCH FOR THE LONDON DISTRICT IS TO BE FORMED IN SOHO.

Inaugural Meeting, 8.15 p.m., Wednesday, August 25th, at 58, Old Compton Street, Soho, W.

All Communists in Soho and district invited to attend.

ADELEINE HENRY, W. MACINTOSH, EDGAR T. WHITEHEAD } *Conveners.*

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